

SENATE BILL 331

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2004 Regular Session
4r1525
CF 4r2142

By: **Senators Hogan, Currie, McFadden, and Middleton**
Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2004
Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Adult Education and Literacy Services - Waiting List - Funding**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor to increase a certain appropriation in the
4 State budget for certain fiscal years for the State Department of Education to
5 distribute as Literacy Works grants in order to reduce the waiting list for certain
6 adult education and literacy services; requiring the Department, in consultation
7 with the General Assembly, to establish an ongoing method of funding adult
8 education and literacy services to reduce a certain waiting list; requiring the
9 Department to submit a certain report to the General Assembly on or before a
10 certain date; and generally relating to funding for adult education and literacy
11 services.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article - Education
14 Section 5-218
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2001 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

17 Preamble

18 WHEREAS, The economy of Maryland needs an educated workforce to be
19 competitive; and

20 WHEREAS, An estimated 613,640 Maryland adults do not have a high school
21 diploma; and

22 WHEREAS, High school dropouts who earn a high school diploma can earn an
23 extra \$7,000 in annual income; and

24 WHEREAS, The literacy level of a parent is the best predictor of a child's
25 literacy achievement; and

26 WHEREAS, The National Adult Literacy Survey reports that 20% of
27 Marylanders function at the lowest literacy level; and

1 WHEREAS, Maryland provides adult education and literacy services to only 4%
2 of the target population; and

3 WHEREAS, Each year, over 16,000 Maryland adults apply to take the GED test
4 and 45% fail the test due to lack of preparation; and

5 WHEREAS, Over 88,000 foreign-born residents who "do not speak English well"
6 or "at all" entered the State since the last census was taken; and

7 WHEREAS, 4,000 to 5,000 adults are on waiting lists for adult education and
8 literacy services annually; and

9 WHEREAS, The task force appointed by the General Assembly in 2001 to study
10 adult education-related services recommended increasing funding; now, therefore,

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
12 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article - Education**

14 5-218.

15 (a) (1) The Department shall distribute competitive grants for adult
16 education AND LITERACY services in accordance with the State Plan for Adult
17 Education and Family Literacy.

18 (2) The grants distributed under this section shall be based on need and
19 performance.

20 (3) Grants under this section may be used for adult education and
21 literacy services, including:

22 (i) GED instruction;

23 (ii) The Maryland Adult External High School Program under §
24 7-205.1 of this article;

25 (iii) English for Speakers of Other Languages;

26 (iv) Family literacy; and

27 (v) Basic skills and literacy instruction.

28 (b) (1) [Funding] SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,
29 FUNDING for the competitive grants under this section shall be as provided in the
30 State budget.

31 (2) IN FISCAL YEARS 2006 AND 2007, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE AN
32 APPROPRIATION IN THE STATE BUDGET EQUAL TO AN INCREASE OF \$1,474,296 OVER
33 THE FISCAL YEAR 2004 APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO DISTRIBUTE AS

1 LITERACY WORKS GRANTS IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE WAITING LIST FOR ADULT
2 EDUCATION AND LITERACY SERVICES TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the State Department of
4 Education, in consultation with the General Assembly, shall establish an ongoing
5 method of funding adult education and literacy services so that the waiting list for
6 adult education and literacy services is reduced to the greatest extent possible. The
7 State Department of Education shall report to the General Assembly on or before
8 January 1, 2005, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on the
9 established method of ongoing funding for adult education and literacy services.

10 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 July 1, 2004.